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PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED.

[BY JOHN WESLEY, M. A.]

[Continued from page 476.]

ARGUMENTS from experience alone will never determine this point. They can only prove thus much, on the one hand, that our Lord is exceeding patient, that he is peculiarly unwilling that any believers should perish; that he bears long, very long with all their follies, waiting to be gracious, and to heal their backslidings; and that, on the other hand, he does actually bring back many lost sheep, who, to man's apprehension, were irrecoverable: but all this does not amount to a convincing proof, that no believer can or does fall from grace. So that this argument, from experience, will weigh little with those who believe the possibility of falling.

And it ought to weigh full as little with those who do not. For if you produce ever so many examples of those who were once strong in faith, and are now more abandoned than ever, they will evade them by saying, "O, but they will be brought back; they will not die in their sins." And if they do die in their sins, we come no nearer; we have not gained one point still. For it is easy to say, "They were only hypocrites; they never had true faith." Therefore, scripture alone can determine this question. And

scripture does so fully determine it, that there needs only to set down a very few texts, with some short reflections upon them.

LXIX. That one who is a true believer, or, in other words, one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of GOD himself, may nevertheless finally fall from grace, appears 1. From the word of GOD by Ezek. chap. xviii. ver. 24. *When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.*

Do you object, "This chapter relates wholly and solely to the Jewish church and nation?" I answer, prove this: till then I shall believe that many parts of it concern all mankind.

If you say, 2. "The righteousness spoken of in this chapter, was merely an outward righteousness, without any principle of grace or holiness." I ask, how is this consistent with the 31st verse, *Cast away from you all your transgressions; whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart, and a new spirit?* Is this a "merely outward" righteousness, without any inward principle of grace or "holiness?"

Will you add, "But admitting the person here spoken of, to be a truly righteous man, what is here said is only a supposition." That I flatly deny. Read over the chapter again, and you will see the facts there laid down, to be not barely *supposed*, but expressly *asserted*.

That the death here mentioned is eternal death, appears from the 26th verse.

When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them (here is temporal death;) *for his iniquity that he hath done, he shall die.* Here is death eternal.

If you assert, "both these expressions signify the same thing, and not two different deaths:" you put a palpable force upon the text, in order to make the Holy Ghost speak nonsense.

"Dying

"Dying in his iniquity, you say, is the same thing as "dying for his iniquity." Then the text means thus, "When he dieth in them, he shall die in them." A very deep discovery!

But you say, "It cannot be understood of eternal death; "because they might be delivered from it by repentance and "reformation." And why might they not by such repentance as is mentioned in the 31st verse, be delivered from eternal death?

But "the whole chapter, you think, has nothing to do "with the spiritual and eternal affairs of men."

I believe every impartial man will think quite the contrary, if he reads calmly either the beginning of it: *All souls are mine, saith the Lord GOD; the soul that sinneth, it shall die* (where I can by no means allow that by the death of the soul is meant only a temporal affliction :) or the conclusion, *Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart, and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

It remains then, one who is righteous in the judgment of GOD himself, may finally fall from grace.

LXX. Secondly, That one who is endued with the faith, which produces a good conscience, may nevertheless finally fall, appears from the words of St. Paul to Timothy, 1 Tim. i. 18, 19. *Was a good warfare, holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith, have made shipwreck.*

Observe 1. These men had once the faith that produces a good conscience, which they once had, or they could not have put it away.

Observe 2. They made shipwreck of the faith, which necessarily implies the total and final loss of it.

You object, "Nay, the putting away a good conscience "does not suppose they had it, but rather that they had it "not."

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This is really surprising. But how do you prove it? "Why, by Acts xiii. 46. where St. Paul says to the Jews, *It was necessary that the word of GOD should first have been spoken to you. But seeing ye put it from you—lo, we turn to the Gentiles.*" Here you see the Jews, who never had the gospel, are said to *put it away*.

How! are you sure they "never had what they are here said to *put away*?" Not so. What they put away, it is undeniable they had till they *put it away*: namely, *the word of GOD, spoken by Paul and Barnabas*. This instance therefore makes full against you. It proves just the reverse of what you cited it for.

But you object further, "men may have a *good conscience*, in some sense, without true faith."

I grant it, in a restrained, limited sense; but not a *good conscience*, simply and absolutely speaking. But such is that of which the apostle here speaks, and which he exhorts Timothy to hold fast: Unless you apprehend, that the *holding it fast*, likewise, "rather supposes he never had it."

"But the faith here mentioned means only the doctrine of faith:" I want better proof of this.

It remains then, one who has the faith which produces a good conscience, may yet finally fall.

LXXI. Thirdly, those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible church, may nevertheless finally fall.

For thus saith the apostle, *Some of the branches are broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree. Be not high-minded, but fear: if GOD spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of GOD! on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt be cut off, Rom. xi. 17, &c.*

We may observe here, 1. The persons spoken to, were actually engrafted into the olive-tree.

2. This olive-tree is not barely the outward, visible church, but the invisible, consisting of holy believers. So the

the text, ver. 16. *If the first fruit be holy, the lump is holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And, ver. 20. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith.*

3. These holy believers were still liable to be cut off from the invisible church, into which they were then grafted.

4. Here is not the least intimation of their being ever grafted in again.

To this you object, 1. "This olive-tree is not the invisible church, but only the outward gospel-church-state." You affirm this; and I prove the contrary: namely, that it is in the invisible church: for it "consists of holy believers, " which none but the invisible church does."

You object, 2. "The Jews who were broken off, were " never true believers in Christ."

I am not speaking of the Jews, but of those Gentiles who are mentioned in the 22d verse; whom St. Paul exhorts to continue in his goodness: otherwise, saith he, thou shalt be cut off. Now I presume, these were true believers in Christ. Yet they were still liable to be cut off.

You assert, 3. "This is only a cutting off from the outward church-state." But how is this proved? So forced and unnatural a construction requires some argument to support it.

You say, 4. "There is a strong intimation, that they " shall be grafted in again." No: not that those Gentiles, who did not continue in his goodness, should be grafted in, after they were once cut off! I cannot find the least intimation of this. "But all Israel shall be saved." I believe they will: but this does not imply the re-engrafting of those Gentiles.

It remains then, that those who are grafted into the spiritual, invisible church, may nevertheless finally fall.

LXXII. Fourthly, those who are branches of Christ, the true vine, may yet finally fall from grace.

For thus saith our blessed Lord himself, *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. I am the vine,*

ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned, John xv. 1, &c.

Here we may observe, 1. The persons spoken of, were *in Christ, branches of the true vine:*

2. Some of these *branches abide not in Christ, but the Father taketh them away:*

3. The *branches which abide not, are cast forth, cast out from Christ and his church:*

4. They are not only *cast forth, but withered;* consequently, never grafted in again:

5. They are not only *cast forth, and withered, but also cast into the fire:* And

6. *They are burned.* It is not possible for words more strongly to declare, that those who are branches of the true vine may finally fall.

"But this," you say, "furnishes an argument for, not against, the persevering of the saints."

Yes, just such an argument for final perseverance, as the above-cited words of St. Paul to Timothy.

But how do you make it out? Why thus, "There are two sorts of branches in Christ the vine: the one fruitful, the other unfruitful. The one are eternally chosen, and these abide in him, and can never withdraw away." Nay, this is the very point to be proved. So that you now, immediately and directly, beg the question.

"The other sort of branches are such as are *in Christ* only by profession; who get into churches, and so are *reckoned in Christ*, and these in time wither away. These never had any life, grace, or fruitfulness from him."

Surely you do not offer this by way of argument! You are again taking for granted the very point to be proved.

But you will prove, that "those are *branches in Christ*, who never had any life or grace from him, because the churches of Judea and Thessalonica are said to be *in Christ*, though every individual member was not savingly in him." I deny the consequence, which can never be made good, unless you can prove, that those very Jews or Thessalonians
who

who never had any life or grace from him, are nevertheless said by our Lord, to be *branches in him*.

It remains, that true believers, who are branches of the true vine, may nevertheless finally fall.

LXXIII. Fifthly, Those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the apostle Peter, *if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (the only possible way of escaping them) they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning,* 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.

But you say, 1. "Their knowledge was not an experimental knowledge." And how do you prove this? "Because had it been such, they could not have lost it." You are begging the question again.

You say, 2. "*Escaping the pollutions of the world*, signifies no more than an outward reformation." How prove you that? You aim at no proof at all. But he that will grant it, may.

You say, 3. "These persons never had any change wrought upon them. They were no other than dogs and swine, not only before and after, but even when they outwardly abstained from gross enormities."

I grant, that before and after that time, during which they *escaped the pollutions of the world* (or, as St. Peter words it in his former epistle, *the corruption that is in the world*) they might well be termed either *dogs* or *swine*, for their gross enormities. But that they deserved such an appellation during that time, I cannot grant without some proof.

It remains, that those who by the inward knowledge of Christ, have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

LXXIV. Sixthly, Those who see the light of the glory of GOD in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been
made

made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless so fall from GOD, as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the writer to the Hebrews, *It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost—If they fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of GOD afresh, and put him to an open shame, Heb. vi. 4, &c.*

Must not every unprejudiced person see, the expressions here used are so strong and clear, that they cannot without gross and palpable wresting, be understood of any but true believers?

“ But the apostle makes only a supposition, *If they shall fall away.*

The apostle makes no supposition at all. There is no *if* in the original. The words are *Ἀδυνατοῦν τοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ φωτισμοῦ ταῖς καὶ παρακρίσεως*. That is, in plain English, *It is impossible to renew again unto repentance, those who were once enlightened, and have fallen away.*

“ No. The words in the original lie literally thus. *It is impossible for those who were once enlightened—and they falling away, to renew them again unto repentance: that is, should they fall away, which is in plain English, if they fall away.*”

Excuse me for speaking plain English here. *Shall a man lie for GOD?* Either you or I do; for I flatly aver (and let all that understand Greek judge between us) that the words in the original do not lie literally thus, *and they falling away* if so they must be *καὶ παρακρίσεως*, in the *present* tense; not *κατακρίσεως*, in the *indefinite*) but that they ought to be translated, *And have fallen away*; which is as literal a translation as the English tongue will bear.

Therefore here is no *if* in the case, no supposition at all, but a plain declaration of matter of fact.

LXXV. “ But why do you imagine these persons were *truly believers?*” Because all the expressions in their case, natural sense, imply it.

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They were once enlightened: an expression familiar with the apostle, and never by him applied to any but believers. So the GOD of our Lord Jesus Christ give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation—The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling—And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward that believe, Eph. i. 17, &c. So again, GOD, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of GOD in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6.

“Nay, *they were enlightened*, means only, they were baptized; or knew the doctrines of the gospel.”

I cannot believe this, till you bring me a few passages from St. Paul's writings, wherein that expression is evidently taken in either of these senses.

[Continued at page 573.]

S E R M O N XXIII.

On PHILIPPIANS ii. 12, 13.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is GOD which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

1. **S**OME great truths, as the being and attributes of GOD, and the difference between moral good and evil, were known in some measure to the Heathen world; the traces of them are to be found in all nations: so that in some sense it may be said to every child of man, *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; even to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy GOD.* With this truth he has in some measure enlightened every one that cometh into the world. And hereby they that have not the law, that have no written law, are a law unto themselves. They shew the work of the law, the substance of it, though not the letter,

written in their hearts by the same hand which wrote the commandments on the tables of stone: their conscience also bearing them witness, whether they act suitably thereto or not.

2. But there are two grand heads of doctrine, which contain many truths of the most important nature, of which the most enlightened Heathens in the ancient world were totally ignorant; as are also the most intelligent Heathens, that are now on the face of the earth: I mean those which relate to the eternal Son of GOD, and the Spirit of GOD; to the Son, giving himself to be a *propitiation for the sins of the world*; And to the Spirit of GOD, renewing men in that image of GOD wherein they were created. For after all the pains which ingenious and learned men have taken, that great man, the chevalier *Ramsay* in particular, to find some resemblance of these truths in the immense rubbish of Heathen authors, the resemblance is so exceeding faint, as not to be discerned but by a very lively imagination. Beside that even this resemblance, faint as it was, is only to be found in the discourses of a very few, and those were the most improved and deeply-thinking men in their several generations, while the innumerable multitudes that surrounded them, were little better for the knowledge of the philosophers; but remained as totally ignorant even of these capital truths, as were the beasts that perish.

3. Certain it is, that these truths were never known to the vulgar, the bulk of mankind, to the generality of men in any nation, till they were brought to light by the gospel. Notwithstanding a spark of knowledge glimmering here and there, the whole earth was covered with darkness, till the Sun of Righteousness arose, and scattered the shades of night. Since this Day-spring from on high has appeared, a great light hath shined unto those, who till then, sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. And thousands of them in every age have known, *that GOD so loved the world, as to give his only-begotten Son, to the end that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish but have everlasting life.* And being entrusted with the oracles of GOD, they have known, that GOD

hath

hath also given us his Holy Spirit, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

4. How remarkable are those words of the apostle, which precede these? *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of GOD, the incommunicable nature of GOD from eternity, counted it no act of robbery, (that is the precise meaning of the word) no invasion of any other's prerogative; but his own unquestionable right, to be equal with GOD.* The word implies both the fulness and the supreme height of the Godhead. To which are opposed the two words, *he emptied, and he humbled himself.* He emptied himself of that divine fulness, veiled his fulness from the eyes of men and angels, taking, and by that very act emptying himself, *the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, a real man like other men.* And being found in fashion as a man, a common man, without any peculiar beauty or excellency, *he humbled himself to a still greater degree, becoming obedient to GOD, though equal with him, even unto death, yea, the death of the cross, the greatest instance both of humiliation and obedience.*

Having proposed the example of Christ, the apostle exhorts them to secure the salvation which Christ hath purchased for them. *Wherefore work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is GOD which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

In these comprehensive words we may observe,

First, That grand truth, which ought never to be out of our remembrance, *It is GOD that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure:*

Secondly, The improvement we ought to make of it, *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling:*

Thirdly, The connexion between them: *It is GOD that worketh in you: therefore work out your own salvation.*

I. 1. First, we are to observe that great and important truth, which ought never to be out of our remembrance, *It is GOD that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* The meaning of these words may be made more plain, by a small transposition of them. *It is GOD that of his*

his good pleasure worketh in you both to will and to do. This position of the words, connecting the phrase *of his good pleasure* with the word *worketh*, removes all imagination of merit from man, and gives GOD the whole glory of his own work. Otherwise we might have had some room for boasting, as if it were our own desert, some goodness in us, or some good thing done by us, which first moved GOD to work. But this expression cuts off all such vain conceits, and clearly shews his motive to work lay wholly in himself: in his own mere grace, in his unmerited mercy.

2. It is by this alone he is impelled to work in man both to will and to do. The expression is capable of two interpretations; both of which are unquestionably true. First, *To will*, may include the whole of inward; *to do*, the whole of outward religion. And if it be thus understood, it implies, that it is GOD that worketh both inward and outward holiness. Secondly, *To will*, may imply every good desire; *to do*, whatever results therefrom. And then the sentence means, GOD breathes into us every good desire, and brings every good desire to good effect.

3. The original words τὸ θέλει and τὸ ἐργεῖν seem to favour the latter construction: τὸ θέλει, which we render *to will*, plainly including every good desire, whether relating to our tempers, words, or actions; to inward or outward holiness. And τὸ ἐργεῖν which we render *to do*, manifestly implies all that power from on high; all that energy which works in us every right disposition, and then furnishes us for every good word and work.

4. Nothing can so directly tend to hide pride from man, as a deep, lasting conviction of this. For if we are thoroughly sensible, that we have nothing which we have not received, how can we glory as if we had not received it? If we know and feel, that the very first motion of good is from above, as well as the power which conducts it to the end: if it is GOD that not only infuses every good desire, but that accompanies and follows it, else it vanishes away; then it evidently follows, that *he who glorieth, must glory in the Lord.*

II. 1. Proceed we now to the second point. If *GOD worketh in you*, then *work out your own salvation*. The original word rendered, *work out*, implies the doing a thing thoroughly. *Your own*—for you yourselves must do this, or it will be left undone for ever. *Your own salvation*—Salvation begins with what is usually termed (and very properly) *preventing grace*; including the first wish to please GOD, the first dawn of light concerning his will, and the first slight, transient conviction of having sinned against him. All these imply some tendency toward life, some degree of salvation, the beginning of a deliverance from a blind, unfeeling heart, quite insensible of GOD and the things of GOD. Salvation is carried on by *convincing grace*, usually in scripture termed *repentance*, which brings a larger measure of self-knowledge, and a farther deliverance from the heart of stone. Afterwards we experience the proper christian salvation, whereby *through grace*, we *are saved by faith*: consisting of those two grand branches, justification and sanctification. By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favour of GOD: by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of GOD. All experience as well as scripture shew this salvation to be both instantaneous and gradual. It begins the moment we are justified, in the holy, humble, gentle, patient love of GOD and man. It gradually increases from that moment, as a *grain of mustard-seed*, which at first is the least of all seeds, but gradually puts forth large branches, and becomes a great tree; till in another instant the heart is cleansed from all sin, and filled with pure love to GOD and man. But even that love increases more and more, till we grow up in all things unto him that is our head, till we attain the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

2. But how are we to *work out* this salvation? The apostle answers, *with fear and trembling*. There is another passage of St. Paul wherein the same expression occurs, which may give light to this. *Servants, obey your masters according to the flesh*, according to the present state of things, (although sensible that in a little time the servant will be free

free from his master,) *with fear and trembling*. This is a proverbial expression, which cannot be understood literally. For what master could bear, much less require, a servant to stand trembling and quaking before him? And the following words utterly exclude this meaning: *in singleness of your heart*, with a single eye to the will and providence of GOD, *not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of GOD from the heart*: doing whatever they do as the will of GOD, and therefore with their might, Eph. vi. 5, &c. It is easy to see, that these strong expressions of the apostle clearly imply two things: first, that every thing be done with the utmost earnestness of spirit, and with all care and caution; (perhaps more directly referring to the former words *μετὰ φόβου* *with fear*) secondly, that it be done with the utmost diligence, speed, punctuality and exactness: not improbably referring to the latter word *μετὰ τρέφου* *with trembling*.

3. How easily may we transfer this to the business of life, the working out our own salvation? With the same temper and in the same manner that Christian servants serve their masters that are upon earth, let all Christians labour to serve their master that is in heaven: that is, first, with the utmost earnestness of spirit, with all possible care and caution, and secondly, with the utmost diligence, speed, punctuality, and exactness.

4. But what are the steps which the scripture directs us to take, in the working out of our own salvation? The prophet *Isaiah* gives us a general answer, touching the first steps which we are to take, *cease to do evil; learn to do well*. If ever you desire that GOD should work in you that faith, whereof cometh both present and eternal salvation; by the grace already given fly from all sin as from the face of a serpent: carefully avoid every evil word and work; yea, abstain from all appearance of evil. And *learn to do well*: be zealous of good works, of works of piety, as well as works of mercy: family-prayer, and crying to GOD in secret. Fast in secret, and *your Father which seeth in secret, he will reward you openly*. Search the scriptures:
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hear them in public, read them in private, and meditate therein. At every opportunity be a partaker of the Lord's supper: *do this in remembrance of him*, and he will meet you at his own table. Let your conversation be with the children of GOD, and see that it *be in grace, seasoned with salt*. As ye have time, do good unto all men, to their souls and to their bodies. And herein *be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*. It then only remains, that ye deny yourselves, and take up your crosses daily. Deny yourselves every pleasure which does not prepare you for taking pleasure in GOD. And willingly embrace every means of drawing near to GOD, though it be a cross, though it be grievous to flesh and blood. Thus, when you have redemption in the blood of Christ, you will *go on to perfection*; till *walking in the light as he is in the light*, you are enabled to testify, that *he is faithful and just*, not only to *forgive your sins*, but to *cleanse you from all unrighteousness*.

III. 1. "But," say some, "what connexion is there between the former and the latter clause of this sentence? Is there not rather a flat opposition, between the one and the other? If it is GOD that worketh in us both to will and to do, what need is there of our working? Does not his working thus supercede the necessity of our working at all? Nay, does it not render our working impracticable, as well as unnecessary? For if we allow that GOD does all, what is there left for us to do?"

2. Such is the reasoning of flesh and blood. And at first hearing it is exceeding plausible. But it is not solid, as will evidently appear, if we consider the matter more deeply. We shall then see, there is no opposition between these, "GOD works; therefore do ye work:" but on the contrary, the closest connexion, and that in two respects. For, first, GOD works; therefore you *can* work: secondly, GOD works, therefore you *must* work.

3. First. GOD worketh in you; therefore you can work: otherwise it would be impossible. If he did not work, it would be impossible for you to work out your own salvation.

tion. *With man this is impossible*, saith our Lord, *for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven*. Yea, it is impossible for any man; for any that is born of a woman, unless GOD work in him. Seeing all men are by nature not only sick, but *dead in trespasses and sins*, it is not possible for them to do any thing well, till GOD raises them from the dead. It was impossible for *Lazarus to come forth*, till the Lord had given him life. And it is equally impossible for us, to *come out of our sins*, yea, or to make the least motion toward it, till he who hath all power in heaven and earth, calls our dead souls into life.

4. Yet this is no excuse for those who continue in sin, and lay the blame upon their Maker, by saying, it is GOD only that must quicken us; for we cannot quicken our own souls. For allowing that all the souls of men are dead in sin *by nature*, this excuses none, seeing there is no man in a mere state of nature: there is no man, unless he has quenched the Spirit, that is wholly void of the grace of GOD. No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called *natural conscience*. But this is not natural: it is more properly termed *preventing grace*. Every man has a greater or less measure of this, which waiteth not for the call of man. Every one has, sooner or later, good desires, although the generality of men stifle them before they can strike deep root, or produce any considerable fruit. Every one has some measure of that light, some faint and glimmering ray, which sooner or later, more or less, enlightens every man that cometh into the world. And every one, unless he be one of the small number, whose conscience is seared as with a hot iron, feels more or less uneasy, when he acts contrary to the light of his own conscience. So that no man sins, because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he hath.

5. Therefore in as much as GOD works in you, you are now able to work out your own salvation. Since he worketh in you, of his own good pleasure, without any merit of yours, both to will and to do, it is possible for you to fulfil all righteousness. It is possible for you, to
love

love GOD, because he hath first loved us; and to walk in love, after the pattern of our great master. We know indeed that word of his to be absolutely true, *without me ye can do nothing*. But on the other hand we know, every believer can say, *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me*.

6. Mean time let us remember, that GOD has joined these together in the experience of every believer. And therefore we must take care, not to imagine they are ever to be put asunder. We must beware of that mock humility, which teacheth us to say, in excuse for our wilful disobedience, "O, I can do nothing:" and stops there, without once naming the grace of GOD. Pray, think twice. Consider what you say. I hope you wrong yourself. For if it be really true, that you can do nothing, then you have no faith. And if you have not faith, you are in a wretched condition: you are not in a state of salvation. Surely it is not so. You can do something, through Christ strengthening you. Stir up the spark of grace which is now in you: and he will give you more grace.

7. Secondly. GOD worketh in you: therefore you must work: you must be *workers together with him*, (they are the very words of the apostle) otherwise he will cease working. The general rule on which his gracious dispensations invariably proceed, is this, *Unto him that hath, shall be given: but from him that hath not, that does not improve the grace already given, shall be taken away what he assuredly hath*. (So the words ought to be rendered.) Even St. Augustine who is generally supposed to favour the contrary doctrine, makes that just remark, *qui fecit nos sine nobis, non salvabit nos sine nobis*: "he that made us without ourselves, will not save us without ourselves." He will not save us, unless we *save ourselves from this untoward generation*: unless we ourselves *fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life*: unless we *agonize to enter in at the strait gate, deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and labour, by every possible means, to make our own calling and election sure*.

8. *Labour then, brethren, not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life. Say with our blessed Lord, though in a somewhat different sense, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. In consideration that he still worketh in you, be never weary of well-doing. Go on, in virtue of the grace of GOD, preventing, accompanying and following you, in the work of faith, in the patience of hope, and in the labour of love. Be ye stedfast and immovable; always abounding in the work of the Lord. And the GOD of peace, who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep [Jesus], make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you what is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever!*

AN EXTRACT

Of the Rev^d. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 495.]

SUNDAY, *July 1.* I preached to about 5000, on that favourite advice of the infidel in *Ecclesiastes* (so zealously enforced by his brethren now) *Be not righteous over much.* At *Hannam* and at *Rose-Green* I explained the latter part of the viith of *St. Luke*: That verse especially, *When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both.*

A young woman sunk down at *Rose-Green*, in a violent agony both of body and mind: As did five or six persons in the evening at the *New Room*, at whose cries many were greatly offended. The same offence was given in the morning by one at *Weaver's-Hall*, and by eight or nine others, at *Gloucester-Lane* in the evening. The first that was deeply touched was *L—W—*; whose mother had been not a little displeased a day or two before, when she was told, how her daughter

daughter had *exposed herself* before all the congregation : The mother herself was the next, who fell down, and lost her senses in a moment ; but went home with her daughter, full of joy, as did most of those that had been in pain.

Soon after the society, I went to Mrs. T—'s, whose nearest relations were earnestly dissuading her, from being *Righteous over much* ; and by the old motive, *Why shouldst thou destroy thyself?* She answered all they advanced with meekness and love, and continued stedfast and immovable. Endure hardship still, thou good soldier of Christ ! Persecuted but not forsaken : Torn with inward, and encompassed with outward temptations : But yielding to none. O may patience have its perfect work !

Tuesday 3. I preached at *Bath* to the most attentive and serious audience I have ever seen there. On *Wednes.* I preached at *Newgate* on those words, *Because of the Pharisees, they durst not confess him.—For they loved the praise of men, more than the praise of GOD.* A message was delivered to me when I had done, from the sheriffs, “ That I must preach there no more.”

Friday 6. I prest a serious Quaker to tell me, why he did not come to hear me as formerly ? He said, “ Because he found we were not *led by the Spirit* ; for we fixt times of preaching before-hand ; whereas we ought to do nothing unless we were *sensibly moved thereto* by the Holy Ghost.” I asked, “ Whether we ought not to do what GOD in scripture commands, when we have opportunity ? Whether the providence of GOD thus concurring with his word, were not a sufficient reason for our doing it, although we were not at that moment *sensibly moved thereto* by the Holy Ghost ?” He answered, “ It was not a sufficient reason. This was to regard *the letter that killeth.*” GOD grant, that I may so regard it all the days of my life !

In the afternoon I was with Mr. *Whitefield*, just come from *London*, with whom I went to *Baptist-Mills*, where he preached concerning the *Holy Ghost*, which all who believe are to receive ; not without a just, though severe censure of those, who preach as if there were no Holy Ghost.

Saturday

Saturday 7. I had an opportunity to talk with him of those outward signs, which had so often accompanied the inward work of GOD. I found his objections were chiefly grounded on gross misrepresentations of matter of fact. But the next day he had an opportunity of informing himself better. For no sooner had he begun (in the application of his sermon) to invite all sinners, to believe in Christ, than four persons sunk down close to him, almost in the same moment. One of them lay without either sense or motion. A second trembled exceedingly. The third had strong convulsions all over his body, but made no noise, unless by groans. The fourth, equally convulsed, called upon GOD, with strong cries and tears. From this time I trust, we shall all suffer GOD to carry on his own work in the way that pleaseth him.

Thursday 13. I went to a gentleman who is much troubled with what they call *lowness of spirits*. Many such have I been with before; but in several of them, it was no bodily distemper. They wanted something, they knew not what, and were therefore, heavy, uneasy, and dissatisfied with every thing. The plain truth is, they wanted GOD, they wanted Christ, they wanted faith. And GOD convinced them of their want, in a way their physicians no more understood than themselves. Accordingly nothing availed till the great physician came. For in spite of all natural means, he who made them for himself, would not suffer them to rest, till they rested in him.

On *Friday* in the afternoon I left *Bristol* with Mr. *Whitefield*, in the midst of heavy rain. But the clouds soon dispersed, so that we had a fair, calm evening, and a serious congregation at *Thornbury*.

In the morning we breakfasted with a Quaker, who had been brought up in the church of *England*: but being under strong convictions of inward sin, and applying to several persons for advice, they all judged him to be under a disorder of body, and gave advice accordingly. Some Quakers with whom he met about the same time, told him, it was the hand of GOD upon his soul; and advised him

to seek another sort of relief than those miserable comforters had recommended. *Wo unto you, ye blind leaders of the blind!* How long will ye pervert the right ways of the Lord? Ye who tell the mourners in Zion, much religion hath made you mad! Ye who send them whom GOD hath wounded to the devil for cure; to company, idle books or diversions! Thus shall they perish in their iniquity; but their blood shall GOD require at your hands!

We had an attentive congregation at Gloucester in the evening. In the morning, Mr. Whitefield being gone forward, I preached to about five thousand there, Christ our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. It rained violently at five in the evening; notwithstanding which two or three thousand people stayed, to whom I expounded that glorious vision of Ezekiel, of the resurrection of the dry bones.

On Monday 16. After preaching to two or three thousand on *What must I do to be saved?* I returned to Bristol, and preached to about three thousand, on those words of Job, *There the wicked cease from troubling; there the weary are at rest.*

Tuesday 17. I rode to Bradford, 3 miles from Bath, whither I had been long invited to come. I waited on the minister, and desired leave to preach in his church. He said, "It was not usual to preach on the week-days: but if I could come thither on a Sunday, he should be glad of my assistance." Thence I went to a gentleman in the town, who had been present when I preached at Bath, and with the strongest marks of sincerity and affection, wished me good luck in the name of the Lord. But it was past. I found him now quite cold. He began disputing on several heads, and at last told me plainly, One of our own college had informed him, "They always took me to be a little crack-brained at Oxford."

However some persons who were not of his mind, having pitched on a convenient place (called *Bear-field*, or *Burry-field*) on the top of the hill under which the town lies; I there offered Christ to about a thousand people, for wisdom,

dom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Thence I returned to *Bath*, and preached on *What must I do to be saved?* to a larger audience than ever before. I was wondering the god of this world was so still: when at my return from preaching, poor R—M— told me, *he could not let me preach any more in his ground.* I asked, him why? He said, “the people hurt his trees, and stole things out of his ground. And besides (added he) *I have already, by letting thee be there, merited the displeasure of my neighbours.*” O fear of man! who is above thee, but they who indeed worship GOD in spirit and in truth? Not even those who have one foot in the grave! Not even those who dwell in rooms of cedar; and who have heaped up gold as the dust, and silver as the sand of the sea!

Saturday 21. I began expounding a second time our Lord's sermon up on the mount. In the morning, Sunday 22, as I was explaining *Blessed are the pure in spirit*, to about three thousand people, we had a fair opportunity of shewing all men, what manner of spirit we were of. For in the middle of the sermon, the pres-gang came and seized on one of the hearers: (Ye learned in the law, what becomes of *Magna charta*, and of *English liberty*, and *property*? Are not these mere sounds, while, on any pretence, there is such a thing as a pres-gang suffered in the land?) all the rest standing still, and none opening his mouth or lifting up his hand to resist them.

Monday 23. To guard young converts from fancying, that they had already attained, or were already perfect, I preached on those words, *So is the kingdom of GOD, as when a man casteth seed into the ground—and riseth day and night, and the seed buddeth forth and springeth up he knoweth not how—first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.*

On several evenings this week, and particularly on Friday, many were deeply convinced; but none were delivered from that painful conviction: *The children came to the birth; but there was not strength to bring forth.* I fear we have grieved the Spirit of the jealous GOD, by questioning
his

his work : and that therefore he is withdrawn from us for a season. *But he will return and abundantly pardon.*

Mond. 30. Two more were in strong pain, both their souls and bodies being well-nigh torn asunder. But though we cried unto GOD, there was no answer, neither did he as yet deliver them at all.

One of these had been remarkably zealous against those that cried out and made a noise, being sure that *any of them might help it if they would.* And the same opinion she was in still till the moment she was struck through as with a sword, and fell trembling to the ground. She then cried aloud, though not articulately, her words being swallowed up. In this pain she continued twelve or fourteen hours, and then her soul was set at liberty. But her master (for she was a servant till that time, at a gentleman's in town) forbid her returning to him, saying, *he would have none in his house, who had received the Holy Ghost.*

Tuesday 31. I preached at *Bradford* to above two thousand, many of whom were of the better rank, on *What must I do to be saved?* They all behaved with decency, and none went away till it was ended. While I was preaching at *Bath*, in my return, some of the audience did not behave so well ; being, I fear, a little too nearly concerned, when I came to the application of those words, *Not only this our craft, is in danger to be set at nought ; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised—whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.*

Having a caution against religious delusion, put into my hands about this time, I thought it my duty to write to the author of it : which I accordingly did, in the following terms :

Reverend Sir,

1. **Y**OU charge me (for I am called a *Methodist*, and consequently included within your charge) with *vain and confident boastings, rash, uncharitable censures, damning all who do not feel what I feel ; not allowing men to be in a salvable state, unless they have experienced some sudden operation*

operation, which may be distinguished as the hand of GOD upon them, overpowering as it were the soul: With denying men the use of GOD's creatures, which he hath appointed to be received with thanksgiving, and encouraging abstinence, prayer and other religious exercises, to the neglect of the duties of our station. O sir, can you prove this charge upon me? The Lord shall judge in that day!

2. I do indeed go out into the highways and hedges to call poor sinners to Christ. But not in a tumultuous manner, not to the disturbance of the public peace, or the prejudice of families. Neither herein do I break any law which I know; much less set at nought all rule and authority. Nor can I be said to intrude into the labours of those, who do not labour at all; but suffer thousands of those for whom Christ died, to perish for lack of knowledge.

3. They perish for want of knowing, That we as well as the Heathens, are alienated from the life of GOD: that every one of us by the corruption of our inmost nature, is very far gone from original righteousness; so far, that every person born into the world, deserveth GOD's wrath and damnation: That we have by nature no power either to help ourselves, or even to call upon GOD to help us; all our tempers and works, in our natural state, being only evil continually. So that our coming to Christ, as well as theirs, must infer a great and mighty change. It must infer, not only an outward change, from stealing, lying and all corrupt communication; but a thorough change of heart, an inward renewal in the spirit of our mind. Accordingly, the old man implies infinitely more than outward evil conversation, even an evil heart of unbelief, corrupted by pride and a thousand deceitful lusts. Of consequence, the new man must imply infinitely more than outward good conversation, even a good heart, which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness: a heart full of that faith, which working by love, produces all holiness of conversation.

4. The change from the former of these states to the latter, is what I call *The new birth*. But you say, I am not content with this plain and easy notion of it, but fill myself
and

and others with fantastical conceits about it. Alas, sir, how can you prove this? And if you cannot prove it, what amends can you make, either to GOD or to me or to the world, for publicly asserting a gross falshood?

5. Perhaps you say, *You can prove this of Mr. Whitefield.* What then? This is nothing to me. I am not accountable for *his* words. The journal you quote I never saw till it was in print. But indeed you wrong him as much as me: First, where you represent him as judging the notions of the Quakers *in general* (concerning being led by the Spirit) to be right and good; whereas he speaks only of those *particular men*, with whom he was then conversing. And again, where you say, he *supposes* a person *believing in Christ*,—to be without any *saving knowledge* of him. He *supposes* no such thing. To *believe in Christ*, was the very thing he *supposed* wanting: As understanding that term *believing* to imply, not only an assent to the articles of our creed, but also *A sure trust and confidence of the mercy of GOD through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

6. Now this it is certain a man may want, although he can truly say, *I am chaste, I am sober, I am just in my dealings, I help my neighbour, and use the ordinances of GOD.* And however such a man may have behaved in these respects, he is not to think well of his own state, till he experiences something within himself, which he has not yet experienced, but which he may be before-hand assured he shall. If the promises of GOD are true. That something is, a living faith: *A sure trust and confidence in GOD, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of GOD.* And from this will spring many other things, which till then he experienced not, as, the love of GOD shed abroad in his heart, the peace of GOD which passeth all understanding, and joy in the Holy Ghost, joy though not *unfelt*, yet *unspeakable* and full of glory.

7. These are some of those *inward fruits of the Spirit*, which must be *felt*, wheresoever they are: And without these, I cannot learn from holy writ, that any man is *born of the Spirit.* I beseech you, sir, by the mercies of GOD,

that if as yet you *know nothing of such inward feelings*, if you do not *feel in yourself these mighty workings of the Spirit of Christ*, at least you would not contradict and blaspheme. When the Holy Ghost hath fervently kindled your love towards GOD, you will know these to be very sensible operations. *As you hear the wind and feel it too*, while it strikes upon your bodily organs, you will know you are under the guidance of GOD's Spirit the same way, namely, by *feeling it in your soul*: By the present peace and joy and love which you feel within, as well as by its outward and more distant effects.

I am, &c.

I have often wished, that all calm impartial men, would consider what is advanced by another writer, in a little discourse concerning enthusiasm or religious delusion, published about this time. His words are,

“ A minister of our church, who may look upon it as his duty to warn his *parishioners*, or an author who may think it necessary to caution his readers, against *such preachers* or their doctrine (enthusiastic preachers, I suppose, such as he takes it for granted the Methodist preachers are) ought to be very careful to act with a *Christian spirit*, and to advance nothing but with *temper, charity and truth*.—Perhaps the following rules may be proper to be observed by them.

1. Not to *blame* persons for doing that now, which scripture records *holy men* of old to have practised, lest, had they lived in those times, they should have condemned them also:

2. Not to censure persons in *holy orders*, for teaching the same doctrines which are taught in the *scriptures* and by *our church*; lest they should ignorantly *censure* what they profess to *defend*.

3. Not to censure any professed *members* of our church, who live *good lives*, for resorting to *religious assemblies* in private houses, to perform in society acts of *divine worship*; when the same seems to have been practised by the primitive Christians; and when, alas! there are so many parishes, where

where a person *piously* disposed, has no opportunity of joining in the public service of our church, more than *one hour and a half* in a week.

4. Not to *condemn* those who are constant attendants on the *communion* and *service* of our church, if they sometimes use *other prayers* in private assemblies: since the *best divines* of our church have composed and published many *prayers*, that have not the sanction of public authorities; which implies a general consent, that our church has not made provision for every private occasion.

[Continued at page 595.]

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER,

[Continued from page 504.]

“**A** WAKING some time after, he said, “*Polly*, I have been thinking that it was *Israel's* fault that they asked for *signs*. We will not do so: but abandoning our whole selves to the will of **GOD**, will lie patiently before him; assured that he will do all things well.”

“My dear love, said I, if ever I have done or said any thing to grieve thee, how will the remembrance wound my heart, if thou shouldst be taken from me? He intreated me with inexpressible tenderness, not to allow the thought, declaring his thankfulness for our union, in a variety of words written on my heart, as with the adamant pen of friendship deeply dipt in blood.

“On Wednesday, after groaning all day long, under the weight of the power of **GOD**, he told me, he had received such a manifestation of the full meaning of those words, *GOD is love*, as he could never be able to express. “It fills my heart, said he, every moment. O *Polly*, my dear *Polly*, *GOD is love*! Shout, shout aloud! I want a
gust

gust of praise to go to the ends of the earth! But it seems as if I could not speak much longer. Let us fix on a sign between ourselves. Now, said he, (tapping me twice with his finger) I mean, GOD is love. And we will draw each other into GOD. Observe! By this we will draw each other into GOD."

"Sally coming in, he cried out, "O Sally, GOD is love! Shout both of you! I want to hear you shout his praise!" All this time the medical friend, who attended him diligently, hoped he was in no danger: as he had no head-ach, but much sleep without the least delirium, and an almost regular pulse. So was the disease, though commissioned to take his life, restrained by the power of GOD.

"On Thursday his speech began to fail. While he was able, he spoke to all that came in his way. Hearing that a stranger was in the house, he ordered her to be called up. But the uttering only two sentences made him ready to faint away. And while he had any power of speech he would not be silent to his friendly Doctor. "O sir, said he, you take much thought for my body: permit me to take thought for your soul!" When I could scarce understand any thing he said, I spoke these words, *GOD is love.* Instantly, as if all his powers were awakened, he broke out in a rapture, "GOD is love! love! love! O for that gust of praise! I want to sound!"—Here his voice again failed. All this time he was in much pain, and suffered many ways: but still with such unutterable patience, as none but those that were present can conceive. If I did but name his sufferings, he would smile and make the sign.

"On Friday, observing his body covered with spots, I felt a sword pierce through my soul. As I was kneeling by his side, with my hand in his, intreating the Lord to be with us in this tremendous hour; he strove to say many things, but could not articulate the words. All he could do was to press my hand, and frequently repeat the sign. At last he breathed out, "Head of the church, be head to my wife!"

When

When I was forced to leave him for a few moments, Sally said to him, my dear master, do you know me? He replied, "GOD will put his right-hand under you." She added, O my dear master, should you be taken away, what a disconsolate creature will my poor, dear mistress be! He replied, "GOD will be her all in all!"

He always took a peculiar pleasure in repeating or hearing those words,

Jesu's love through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy cries.

Whenever I repeated them to him, he would answer, "boundless! boundless! boundless!" He now added, though not without much difficulty,

Mercy's full power I soon shall prove,
Lov'd with an everlasting love.

"On Saturday in the afternoon, his fever seemed quite off, and a few friends standing near his bed, he reached his hand to each: and looking on a minister, said, "are you ready to assist to-morrow?" His recollection surprised us, as the day of the week had not been mentioned in the room. Many were of opinion he would recover: and one of them said to him, do you think the Lord will raise you up? He strove to answer, and could just pronounce, "Raise me up in the resurr"—Meaning in the resurrection. To another who asked the same question, he said, "I leave it all to GOD."

"In the evening the fever came again, and with greater violence than ever. The mucus then falling on his throat, almost strangled him. It was supposed, the same painful symptom would grow more and more violent to the last. As I felt this exquisitely, I cried to the Lord to remove it. And, glory be to his name, he did! From that time it returned no more.

As night drew on, I perceived him dying very fast. His fingers could hardly make the sign, which he scarce ever forgot: and his speech seemed quite gone. I said, My dear

dear creature, I ask not for myself : *I know thy soul* : but for the sake of others, if Jesus is very present with thee, lift up thy right-hand. Immediately he did. If the prospect of glory sweetly opens before thee, repeat the sign. He instantly raised it again, and in half a minute, a second time. He then threw it up, as if he would reach the top of the bed. After this, his hands moved no more. But on my saying, Art thou in pain ? He answered, "No." From this time he lay in a kind of sleep, though with his eyes open and fixt. For the most part he sat upright, against pillows, with his head a little inclining to one side. And so remarkably composed, yea triumphant was his countenance, that the least trace of death was scarce discernible in it. Twenty-four hours he was in this situation, breathing like a person in common sleep. About thirty-five minutes past ten on Sunday night, Aug. 14, his precious soul entered into the joy of his Lord, without one struggle or groan, in the fifty-sixth year of his age.

"And here I break off my mournful story : but on my bleeding heart, the fair picture of his heavenly excellencies will be for ever drawn. When I call to mind his ardent zeal, his laborious endeavours to seek and save the lost, his diligence in the employment of his time, his Christ-like condescension toward me, and his uninterrupted converse with heaven : I may well be allowed to add, my loss is beyond the power of words to paint. I have often gone through deep waters ; but all my afflictions were nothing to this. Well : I want no pleasant prospect but upwards ; nor any thing whereon to fix my hope, but immortality.

"From the time I have had the happiness and honour of being with him, every day more and more convinced me, he was the christian. I saw, I loved in him, the image of my Saviour, and thought myself the happiest of women, in the possession of the most sympathizing and heavenly friend. My sorrow bears a due proportion. But it is alleviated by that thought, *United in GOD we cannot be divided*. No : we are of one household still : we are joined in him as our center ; of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.

named. It is said of New Testament believers, *they are come to the spirits of just men made perfect*: to the glorious privilege of communion with the church triumphant. But this is far more apparent to the eyes of celestial spirits, than to ours, which are yet veiled with flesh and blood. Yet as there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, and as the prayers of saints still on earth are represented by incense in the hands of the elders, I can only consider departed spirits, and ministering angels, as one innumerable company, continually surrounding us. And are they not as nearly united to their fellow-soldiers now, as when they were in the body? What should hinder? Gratitude and affection are natives of heaven, and live for ever there. Forgetfulness is a property of mortality, and drops off with the body. Therefore they that loved us in the Lord, will surely love us for ever: can any thing material interrupt the light or presence of a spirit? Nay,

Walls within walls no more the passage bar
Than unopposing space of liquid air.

“ On the 17th, his remains were deposited in *Madeley* church-yard, amidst the tears and lamentations of thousands. The *service* was performed by the Rev. Mr. *Hatton*, rector of *Waters-Upton*, whom GOD enabled to speak in a pathetic manner to the weeping flock. In the conclusion, at my request, he read the following paper:

“ As it was the desire of my beloved husband to be buried in this plain manner, so out of tenderness, he begged, that I might not be present. And in every thing I would obey him.

“ Permit me then, by the mouth of a friend, to bear an open testimony, to the glory of GOD, that I who have known him in the most perfect manner, am constrained to declare, that I never knew any one walk so closely in the ways of GOD as he did. The Lord gave him a conscience tender as the apple of an eye. And he literally preferred the interest of every one to his own.

“ He

"He was rigidly just, and perfectly loose from attachment to the world. He shared his all with the poor, who lay so close to his heart; that at the approach of death, when he could not speak without difficulty, he cried out "*O my poor! What will become of my poor?*" He was blest with so great a degree of humility, as is scarce to be found. I am witness how often he has rejoiced, in being treated with contempt. Indeed it seemed the very food of his soul, to be little and unknown.

"His zeal for souls I need not tell you. Let the labours of twenty-five years, and a martyr's death in the conclusion, imprint it on your hearts. His diligent visiting of the sick occasioned the fever, which by GOD's commission tore him from you and me. And his vehement desire to take his last leave of you with dying lips and hands, gave (it is supposed) the finishing stroke, by preparing his blood for putrefaction. Thus has he lived and died your servant. And will any of you refuse to meet him at GOD's right-hand in that day?

"He walked with death always in sight. About two months ago, he came to me and said, "My dear love, I know not how it is, but I have a strange impression, death is near us, as if it were to be some sudden stroke upon one of us. And it draws out all my soul in prayer, that we may be ready." He then broke out, "Lord, prepare the soul thou wilt call! And O! stand by the poor disconsolate one that shall be left behind!"

"A few days before his departure, he was filled with love in an uncommon manner. The same he testified as long as he had a voice, and continued to the end, by a most lamb-like patience, in which he smiled over death, and set his last seal to the glorious truths he had so long preached among you.

"Three years, nine months and two days, I have possessed my heavenly-minded husband. But now the sun of my earthly joy is set for ever, and my soul filled with an anguish, which only finds its consolation, in a total resignation to the will of GOD. When I was asking the Lord,
if

if he pleased to spare him to me a little longer, the following promise was imprest on my mind, *where I am, there shall my servants be, that they may behold my glory!* Lord, hasten the time!"

18. There is little need of adding any farther character of this man of GOD, to the foregoing account, given by one who wrote out of the fulness of her heart. I would only observe, that for many years I despaired of finding any inhabitant of *Great Britain*, that could stand in any degree of comparison with *Gregory Lopez*, or *Monsieur de Renty*. But let any impartial person judge, if Mr. *Fletcher* was at all inferior to them. Did he not experience as deep communion with GOD, and as high a measure of inward holiness, as was experienced by either one or the other of those burning and shining lights! And it is certain, his outward light shone before men, with full as bright a lustre as theirs. But if any would draw a parallel between them, there are two circumstances which should be well observed. One is, we are not assured that the writers of *their* lives did not extenuate, if not suppress their faults. And some faults we are assured there were, namely, some touches of superstition, and some of idolatry, as the worship of images, angels and saints, the virgin Mary in particular. But I have not suppressed, or even extenuated any thing in Mr. *Fletcher's* life. Indeed I know nothing that needed to be extenuated, much less to be suppressed. A second circumstance is, that the writers of *their* lives, could not have so full a knowledge of them, as I, and much more Mrs. *Fletcher* had; being eye and ear-witnesses of his whole conduct. Consequently *we knew* that his life was not sullied with any taint of idolatry or superstition. I was intimately acquainted with him for thirty years. I conversed with him morning, noon and night, without the least reserve, during a journey of many hundred miles. And in all that time, I never heard him speak an improper word, or saw him do an improper action. To conclude. Within fourscore years, I have known many excellent men, holy in heart and life. But one equal to him I have not

known; one so uniformly and deeply devoted to GOD.
So unblameable a man in every respect, I have not found
either in *Europe* or *America*. Nor do I expect to find ano-
ther such on this side eternity.

Yet it is possible *we* may be such as he was. Let us
then endeavour to follow him as he followed Christ.

HIS E P I T A P H.

Here lies the body of
The Rev. JOHN WILLIAM de la FLECHERE,
Vicar of *Madeley*,
Who was born at *Nyon*, in *Switzerland*,
September 12th, 1729,
And finished his course, August 14th, 1785,
In this Village;
Where his unexampled Labours
Will never be forgotten.

He exercised his Ministry for the space of
Twenty-five Years
In this Parish,
With uncommon Zeal and Ability.

But though many believed his report,
Yet he might with justice have adopted
The Lamentation of the Prophet,
"All the Day long have I stretched out my hands
Unto a disobedient and gainsaying People:
Yet surely my Judgment is with the Lord,
And my Work with my GOD."

AN ACCOUNT

Of the most remarkable Occurrences of the Life of

JOSEPH EVERETT.

*[In a Letter to Bishop Asbury.]**(Continued from page 511.)*

THIS glorious change was wrought in my soul on the thirteenth of *June*, in the year of our Lord 1763, on a precious sabbath-day, about ten or eleven o'clock. I continued in this sweet frame of spirit for some time; I felt no temptations nor trials; all was a sweet, divine calm. The world was dead to me and I was dead to it. I felt no wrong tempers in my heart, and so simple was I, that I thought verily there was no sin in my soul; and hoped to continue in that happy state to all eternity—But alas! in a short time, I found to the contrary. The enemy of my soul began to work on the unrenewed part of my nature; and I felt pride, self-will and anger, which did not distress me as it ought to do; and the reason why it did not, was this:

The ministers that preached to us, told us, it was our privilege to know our sins forgiven; but that it was impossible to live without sin, till death separated soul and body. And that all we could possibly do was to strive against it, and not give way; and that in the article of death it would be done away, and not before. They said likewise, that many of the most eminent saints of GOD did sin, and yet continued in the favour of the Lord—(to wit,) *David* in the matter of *Uriah*; that in the very act of adultery and murder he was a favourite of heaven. And that *Paul* was a good Christian, when crying out, "I am a carnal soul under sin."

Now the preaching of this kind of doctrine, which they attempted to prove by scripture, and I believed to be true, had a bad effect; instead of pressing me forward to the en-
tire

tire destruction of the body of sin and death, it caused me to rest and feed these brats of hell. And made me conclude, that if all the saints of both the Old and New Testament, did and must live in sin; therefore I must live in sin too. Thus I went on, deceived by such doctrine, till I lost the seed, the love of GOD, out of my soul; and was reduced to a lifeless form of godliness; till the power of it was as entirely gone as if I never had received it. Thus I tear thousands are deceived, till they drop down to hell.

I had told my experience to some of the brethren, they approved of it, and I concluded all to be well. I still hoped myself to be in the way to happiness. At this satan was well pleased, who was going about seeking to devour. But whom was he seeking to devour? Not the carnally secure; for they are devoured already. But those who through grace had broken the snare and made their escape. At last the devil found a scheme that effectually answered his purpose, he baited his hook and after some time I swallowed it.

I went to hear preaching as usual, but my conscience reproached me, and told me I was a hypocrite. I prayed in my family, but no life—my visits to my closet were short, and very seldom; and withal uncomfortable.—I would talk about religion, but my heart was after my idols. In plain truth, I lived in such a manner as I thought it impossible for a Christian to live—though my principle was, that there was no falling from justifying grace. And indeed it was impossible for me to fall, for I had shamefully fallen already.

The brethren began to look very coldly at me, and many I believe were much grieved, and were very sorry for me, and thought that I was fallen; but hoped that I should rise again: which they doubted not but I should, if ever I had been converted. For that is the criterion by which they judge. But they seeing no amendment, nor I striving for any, but growing worse and worse; they disowned me; and I never went to meeting, perhaps for months together. So that those very people began to speak evil of me, and say that I had never been converted—but the Lord knows better,

ter, for their eyes were blinded by false doctrine ; and they were ignorant that the word of GOD was fulfilled in me, as spoken by the apostle *Peter*, in his second epistle, first chapter, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9th verses. And my proud heart could not bear to be slighted by them ; for I well knew, from my intimate acquaintance with them, that not one in forty of them had ever experienced the pardoning love of GOD. And when I told them, what the Lord had done for my soul, they knew nothing of such an experience.

Thus I went on to please my master, the devil ; whose servant I was. But my life was a burthen to me. As the service of GOD is perfect freedom, so the work of the devil is the most servile drudgery. And thus saith the evangelist, *St. Luke*, on a like occasion. *While the strong man armed keeps his palace, his goods are in peace ; but when a stronger than he comes upon him, he takes away his armour, and spoils his goods.* So the unclean spirit had been driven out of my heart, and had been walking in dry places seeking rest, but finding none ; was now taking possession of his old habitation again. I was beginning to contract a relish for carnal and forbidden pleasures ; and believing the impossibility of falling from grace, which is a grand delusion ; he found the house empty of all good desires ; swept by unbelief, and garnished with delusion ; and he took up his abode there again, for near seventeen years ; with not only seven other spirits more wicked than himself, but, for aught I know, seventy times seven. For I was a worse sinner by a thousand times, than ever I was before I professed religion. And I am bold to say, that the apostate and the backslider, are more like that grand apostate the devil, than any other creatures out of hell. And I believe, if there are different apartments in the bottomless lake, they will be sure of the worst. They will not get even a sight of the common damned ; they will sink so far beneath them.

My conscience giving me no rest, I began to associate with the wicked, the children of the devil ; for I wanted to still the clamours of an abused, angry conscience. And I exactly took the method which *Cain* did to stifle his. He
by

by the noise of axes and hammers, in building cities; I by the hurry of business and the clash of wicked company: and often by drinking; and so on from one thing to another, till I could sin with the vilest.

Methinks I can compare a sinner departing from GOD, to the dropping of a stone from the top of an high mountain. Only let the stone go out of your hand, and it will not stop till it gets to the bottom, if there is nothing in the way. So is the soul when it begins to depart from the Lord. But the stone as it descends will go swifter and swifter; so the soul, the farther it withdraws from GOD, with the greater ease it can sin; till it can sin with as much freedom and as little remorse as a devil. And if it is not stopped by the free preventing grace of GOD, it will not stop till it reaches the bottom of hell.

I continued in this wretched state till the commencement of the war between *Great Britain* and *America*; and then became a warm whig—insomuch that I repaired to the muster-field to learn the use of arms; then turned out, with many others of the same disposition, a volunteer. We took our march to the place of action; where I conducted myself in such a manner, as gained the esteem of all my acquaintance. When I had acted my part at camp, I returned home to my friends in good credit, and was well received by them.

O what lengths will pride, or what the blind world calls honour, carry a person to!

I was well satisfied while I was in the army, that I was not prepared for death. Yet sure I am, that before I would have fled from the place of action or danger, without orders, I would have dropped dead on the spot; though my soul must be lost for ever.

By this time some of my acquaintance had procured me a commission in the militia. And I went constantly every muster-day, till about February, in the year 1778. When I returned from the camp, there was a people called Methodists had come into the neighbourhood where I lived, and were preaching and telling the people, that every body might be saved; which was a doctrine that I did not approve of,
and

and I was determined to oppose them. For I had not the least distant thought that they were sent of GOD; but thought it was right to oppose them: which rendered what I did pardonable. This is what the apostle St. Paul alludes to, when he says, *He found mercy because he did it ignorantly, in unbelief.* Indeed, I went to hear one preach whose name was R. W. some time before, but to no purpose, because I did not quit my sin; though I know that I felt a measure of power. Thus, the preaching of the gospel to thousands, is like sowing seed on the way-side. I still continued to persecute them at all times, when opportunity offered; but like all the rest of the devil's children, always behind their backs, or at a distance. As I have frequently seen since, our greatest enemies are those who will not hear us; and if at any time they do come out, they pay so little attention to what they hear, and run away with a sentence here and there, that they fill the hearts of the people with prejudice. Thus the word becomes a savour of death unto death. I think that prejudice is one of the first-born of hell. It was grace, mere grace that prevented my eternal ruin.

In this way I went on, from the time I left the camp till the spring of 1778. I went one evening to a neighbour's house, to hear one exhort; but got no profit by going: the reason was, because I was prejudiced against the speaker, and filled with unbelief. I did not like to hear the people make such a noise, though I liked a noise in the tavern well enough. I left the place, and spoke evil of the preacher. All this time there was the greatest intimacy between me and the enemies of the Lord; till about the 14th of March, I went to one of the neighbour's on some business; the woman of the house told me there was to be preaching at Mr. White's that evening, and asked me if I would not go; I told her I thought not, for I did not like them. She knew that I did not, but continued to persuade me until I went away. On my going home, I found two men there who were just setting off to the meeting; I told them if they would stop until I got ready, I would go with them. They did, and I set off with them, without inquiring why or for what

I went

I went—so mysterious are the works of Divine Providence, whose footsteps are in the deep. When I came there the congregation was collecting; and at early candle-light who should come down to preach, but you; it was the first time I ever saw you. After singing a hymn and prayer, you expounded part of the second chapter of Judges, to which I gave the strictest attention. After the meeting was ended, and I was going home, some of the Methodists asked me how I liked what I had heard. I told them I found no fault with it. They seemed to be glad. The exposition had not the least tendency to displease, for it was explained in a practical and not in a doctrinal manner: and there was no fault to be found, unless I rejected it because it was delivered by a Methodist-preacher; which is too much the case in this polite age, especially among the rich and the great, the honourable children of the devil.

From my own experience, I see that to preach principles is not attended with salutary effects on the hearts of the people: because principles and religion are two things. For, positive I am, that a man may have a well-digested system of principles, and not be acquainted with religion; for principles may be learned, as a school-boy learns arithmetic or the mathematics; but religion is the love of GOD shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

I do not remember that any particular part of the discourse had any alarming power on my conscience, at that time; but this I well know, that prejudice subsided, and from that evening a way was made for conviction. Before this, I had no power to pray; after this, I found power to pray: before this, I could not attend to the concerns of my soul; after this, I had power. I had not bowed my knees in private for twelve or fourteen years, but I obtained liberty after this.

I compare the human soul sometimes to a castle that we cannot get in or out of, without a key. Let the key be lost, the door must continue shut. This had been the case with me. I once had the key, but the devil had got it from me. The Son of GOD says, "Without me, ye can nothing;

nothing; and this is the case with thousands: the Lord offers the power, the key to all; some accept of it and use it, and thereby save their souls; others receive it for a while, and afterward neglect to use it, and it is taken from them. While the greatest part of mankind, for the love of riches, honours and pleasures, pay no attention to the things that belong to their peace; and like the unbelieving Jews, everlastingly perish.

I now felt the evident returns of GOD's grace and power to revisit my soul, which had been so long dead and barren. This was like the return of the cheering spring after a long and tedious winter. I likewise observed the devil to oppose the Spirit of GOD, who by his grace was, as it were, brooding over the dark abyfs of my soul. I did not feel it as a spirit of peace and consolation, but as a spirit of conviction; to enlighten and empower me to use every means and method to save my soul.

I began now to be weary of keeping evil company. Military affairs began to sink in my esteem. I saw the necessity of using private prayer, and that with fervour; of reading the Bible, and meditation.

By this time, the eyes of the people began to be upon me. They saw an alteration in my behaviour. I had lost the martial spirit; and in some degree I had got the spirit of humility. This the devil could not put up with. He began to rouse his forces, to enquire into the cause of this mighty change.

Those that used to be my only companions, now stood aloof and looked very coolly at me;—and I in my turn paid as little regard to what they said or did. They knew me too well to carry matters too far; for I was as ready to vindicate my proceedings as they were to condemn. The Methodists likewise had their eyes on me; and I doubt not but for good. They observed some alteration in my external conduct; and especially my much respected friend E. W. took particular notice of me, and being a person of understanding as well as piety, guest at the cause, and used every prudential means to render the conviction effectual. He frequently

quently asked me home with him from places of preaching ; to converse on the subject of Methodism. For he well knew that I was calvinistic in principles ; and that those principles were destructive in their tendency to religion : which I never had seen. For which reason he used to furnish me with Mr. *Wesley's* and *Fletcher's* writings, to discover to me the difference between Calvinism and Methodism. And I doubt not but his pious endeavour had its desired effect. For he did it with such prudence and caution, that he entirely prevented the least prejudice ; and made way for liberal principles to take place.

I remember to have heard him say these words at a certain time, that " if Christ died for all the world, all the world was salvageable ; and they that were lost, were lost by their own fault : " which gave me more insight into the scheme of redemption than ever I got before, by all the reading, preaching and conversation that I had *practised*. But I had not yet obtained the one thing I wanted ; the pardoning love of GOD. Yet through grace I was determined to have it, or die in the attempt.

I now found my former experience to be useful to me ; and I well knew, if ever I was taken into the favour of GOD, which way it must come. Methinks it was made known to me, that if I did not improve that present season of grace, that the Lord would cast me off for ever. This struck me deep. My black ingratitude to an indulgent benefactor made me ashamed. I think I was every day more and more engaged with the Lord to save my soul ; and I found the devil as much engaged to prevent my salvation. Often in retiring to private devotion, I have felt the spirit of the devil in my very flesh, striving to make me ashamed of those duties, in which I was seeking the Lord. It seems as if I have heard the foul fiend say—" What ! you are at prayers again, are you ? you had better quit, for after a while you will tire and leave off as you did before."—Thus I had fears within, and fightings without : for by this time I was a bye-word. However, I paid very little regard to these things ;

things; knowing by scripture as well as by past experience, that they who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

[Continued at page 601.]

An extract of a letter from PHILIP BRUCE, elder of the Methodist Episcopal church, to Bishop Coke, dated Portsmouth, Virginia, March 25, 1788.

Reverend and very dear Sir,

TIS with pleasure I take my pen to write to you, brother, an account of GOD's gracious dealings with us in these parts of the Lord's vineyard; for certainly the work has been extraordinary: vast numbers flocking into the fold of Christ from every quarter. In many places in this circuit, as soon as the preacher begins to speak, the power of GOD appears to be present; which is attended with trembling among the people, and falling down; some lie void of motion or breath, others are in strong convulsions: and thus they continue, till the Lord raises them up, which is attended with emotions of joy and rapture. When one gets happy, it spreads like a flame: so that one after another, they arise to join in the praises of their loving Redeemer.

But the greatest work in many parts of this circuit is among the blacks. In some places it seems as if they would all turn unto the Lord. The following is only a specimen. A few nights past we held a night-meeting for the negroes in the *Isle of Wight* county. Soon after preaching began, there arose a cry among the poor slaves (of which there was a great number present) which in a short time drowned the preaching: a number was on the floor crying for mercy, but soon one and another arose praising GOD. Those who were happy, would surround those who were careless, with such alarming exhortations, as appeared sufficient to soften the hardest hearts. If they could get them to hang down their heads, they would begin to shout and praise GOD,
and

and the others would soon begin to tremble and sink. I saw a number (some who at first appeared to be most stubborn) brought to the floor, and there lie crying till most of them got happy. But the conversion of the poor blacks gives huge offence to the rich and great. I suppose if they dared, they would tear us in pieces: but through the grace of GOD, we regard them not, and had rather offend one half of the world to save the other, than let them all go quietly to hell together. The work has been chiefly carried on, by the instrumentality of brother *Jackson*, in this circuit.

But great as the work is with us, it loses all report; the work above us is so far superior to what it is here, especially in *Suffex* and *Brunswick*. Brother *Cox* informs me, that between twelve and fifteen hundred whites have been converted in his circuit, besides a great number of blacks. Here liberty prevails. A friend informed me that at the *February* court in *Suffex*, the Methodists manumitted above an hundred, at that one court.

Brother *Easter* informs me, that by the best account he can make, there have been two thousand whites converted in his circuit this past year. The work has likewise spread very considerably in other circuits to the Southward and Westward. Great is the joy, great is the glory. Surely *America* will become the mart of nations for piety. I remain your affectionate brother in Christ.

PHILIP BRUCE.

From Miss E. R. to the Rev. J. Wesley.

Otley, May 23, 1774.

Rev. Sir,

THE character you recommend is truly amiable: may GOD help me to follow *Miranda* up the steep of excellence!

On the Sunday morning you left us at *Birstal*, several of us joined in beseeching GOD to make us all his own.

While

While I was praying that the enemies I had seen that day, might be seen no more for ever, the Lord applied such promises to my soul as encouraged me much. Yet I hardly durst lay hold on them, unbelief striving so hard to prevent my entering into rest: but the Lord continued so to bless me, that at last, I could not doubt: all I feared was, losing what I had received: which made me backward in speaking of it. I thought I would wait and see how it would be with me by and by.

On my return to Otley, my soul was still kept near to GOD; but the enemy kept whispering, "it will not be always so; a few days hence thy inbred foes will again return; thou wilt be brought from the sweet rest thou now enjoyest, to thy former state." When these thoughts were suggested, I flew to Jesus by prayer, who heard and helped me. But still I did not speak of the great things GOD had done for me, for fear I should not keep the blessing. But all the week I lived as in the suburbs of heaven: Jesus was all in all to me! At last, not being able to eat my morsel alone any longer, on Sunday I told my band what GOD had done for my soul. After this, I was tempted I had done wrong; but on crying to Jesus, Satan was put beneath my feet: and every time I have since declared the goodness of GOD in this respect, he has sweetly shined on me.

At present I feel I am nothing in myself; but Jesus feeds me with his love from day to day. On this account I find him very precious indeed; and to love him more and more is all I want on earth.

Private prayer has been very sweet to me of late. I find such a holy boldness, in telling Jesus my wants, as tongue cannot express. And though my wants are many, my chief request is, to be filled with all the fulness of GOD.

O sir, how great is the blessedness of living by faith! May I prove it more and more, till faith is sweetly lost in sight! O what a field of fresh delights do I see before me! I am lost in wonder! They are all for me! Jesus, and all he has, is mine! O blessed portion! I have a goodly heritage

tage indeed! May I prize it, and walk worthy of it all my days!

I hope, dear sir, you will reprove and advise me as occasion shall require. In doing which you will greatly oblige
Your unworthy friend in the gospel, E. R.

*A short account of the death of Mrs. PECK, of Ensham:
written by Mr. WILLIAM SHEPHERD.*

MRS. Peck was delivered on Wednesday last of two fine boys, who are likely to live. She remained tolerably well till Friday morning, when she complained of a pain in her bowels. Dr. Wall, of Oxford, was sent for, who used every means in his power to save her. But it seems GOD had otherwise determined; for a scarlet fever came on furiously, attended with a putrid sore throat. Her milk likewise was kept back, which so affected her head, that it took away her senses, and threw her into a violent agony, which continued, with very little intermission, till twelve o'clock last night, when GOD took her to himself!

She was able only to speak once, (after she was seized with the fever) when looking up to Mr. Peck, she said, "I am now going home!" Her pain then coming on more violently, she spoke no more: but the smiles on her countenance, and the other motions which she made, perfectly satisfied all who were with her, that her mind was quite happy in GOD. They all said, they never found the power of GOD so sensibly present, as while they were commending her soul to him, just before she expired.

I have known her several years, and I cannot say I ever saw such a pattern of hospitality. Her house and heart were open to receive all who were travelling in the way to Sion.

But she had a peculiar regard for all the messengers of GOD, particularly Mr. Wesley; and thought no expence or labour great, if she could but make them comfortable in themselves, and help them forward in their Master's work.

By

By her sudden and happy death, I seem to be more crucified to this vain and uncertain world; and more determined to give myself up to the service of GOD; and thereby to lay a good foundation against the time to come, that (through infinite mercy) I may lay hold on eternal life.

Oxford, Dec. 18, 1786.

W. S.



A Letter from Mr. HOWELL HARRIS, to a Friend.

Pembroke, Dec. 4, 1741.

Dear Brother,

I Hope that this will find you coming up out of the wilderness, out of yourself, out of creatures, out of your own will, and out of your own wisdom, leaning on the Beloved. When we fall into nothing in ourselves, we are found in him; when we cease from our own works, he begins to work in us; and when we deny our own wisdom, and see it to be but folly, we shall have wisdom from him. O may we never rest till all the works of the devil are destroyed in us! Till we can say, "The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of GOD:" and can add, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me." Then, and not till then, have we true rest to our souls.

I hope you will still shew your love to me, by pleading for me at the throne of grace, that I may not stop short of any privilege promised in the gospel: but that I may be the salt of the earth; have my conversation in heaven; have fellowship with the Father and the Son, and adorn the gospel of GOD our Saviour in all things.

It is a common thing, I see, to be an almost Christian, and to call every conviction, conversion; every little feeling and change, faith; and every sorrow, evangelical repentance. But indeed I see the way very narrow, and fear there are but few that find it. Those that have once really known our dear Lord, cannot easily rest without daily and hourly

hourly feeding on him. Indeed he is to such as know him, in all his offices, names and relations (through the discovery of the Holy Ghost) a pearl of great price; truly precious and altogether lovely. They desire him; they feed on him, talk of him, and live to him; and become more and more like him: dying daily to all that is visible; and living a life hid with Christ in GOD, till they know no one after the flesh; but feel an inward, secret union, and spiritual fellowship, with all who know and love him.

Pray much then, that the spirit and temper of our dear Lord may be more regarded. Where his spirit prevails, there is meekness and love, humility and tenderness for all that belong to him. Indeed we cannot glorify GOD, but while we walk in his Spirit; nor can we see, or hear, or feel spiritually, but in his Spirit: and where his Spirit is, there is liberty.

I hope that all among you forget the things behind: (I am sure that disputing, evil-surmising, and bigotry, are things which are or ought to be left behind) and press forward to those that are before. May you all seek for a faith which overcomes the world, and lives upon Christ! If Satan is every moment tempting, and if we continually stand in need of fresh supplies, then we should every moment see that the eye of our faith be looking up to its author and finisher, till we are all changed from glory to glory.

I am your affectionate Brother,

H. HARRIS.

POETRY.

Poetry.

BIRTH-DAY REFLECTIONS.

ONCE more return'd, I see my natal day:
 Think, O my soul! how time has stole away;
 As swift as sands run down the slipp'ry glass,
 So swift our fleeting, short-liv'd moments pass!
 But canst thou think with pleasure now they're gone,
 On one good word or work thou e'er hast done?
 Say, canst thou bear the retrospective view?
 Contented bid the time that's past adieu?
 Turn all the leaves of sacred conscience o'er,
 Nor be afraid to search her hidden store?
 But O, remember while you thus look back,
 And life's review this hour begin to take;
 That he, whose eyes are as a flame of fire,
 Has ever seen each thought and each desire;
 Each secret purpose constantly survey'd,
 And every action in his balance weigh'd.

With sober reason from my early youth
 I sought the path of virtue and of truth.
 Unruly riot and tumultuous noise,
 My soul disdain'd as low unmeaning joys.
 These were too gross: in pleasures more refin'd
 I aim'd to "burnish" and improve my mind.
 The serious book, or sweet melodious song,
 Or cheerful converse, did the hours prolong;
 Or walks enchanting stole the time away,
 While fanning zephyrs cool'd the sultry day.
 When hoary winter, with his shiv'ring face
 And sullen gloom, resum'd, in turn, his place,

With lively tales we made the ev'ning smile,
 Or harmless sports the tedious hours beguile:
 And oft to gain instruction, how to shun
 The wily arts of man's insidious tongue,
 In well-wrought tragedy we saw display'd
 The mournful scene of innocence betray'd:
 Or cruel monarchs thrown from empire down,
 Whose fell ambition had usurp'd the crown.

Thus eighteen years had smoothly roll'd around,
 While what I sought, alas! I had not found.
 The solid happiness, the bliss refin'd,
 Fair peace serene, which Heav'n for man design'd;
 Was quite a stranger to my anxious heart:
 I neither knew nor lov'd the better part.
 No wanton act had stain'd my virtuous life,
 No dire revenge, no hate or envious strife.
 Say then, ye moralists! why should I bear
 The worm of conscience gnawing to despair?
 I knew the cause, though in your schools untaught,
 My GOD was not in all my wand'ring thought.

Conscience awaken'd, thus to reason cry'd,
 What is thy confidence? thy virtuous pride?
 What is thy hope (when by almighty pow'r
 Rais'd from the dead) of living evermore?

Reason alarm'd, trembling and pale, looks back,
 To find what friends in virtue she can make.
 Dreadful eternity extended lies,
 And strips the soul of ev'ry fair disguise:
 While conscience unrelenting still maintains
 Her right to raise new fears, and cause new pains.

What canst thou, feeble reason, do? she said,
 Thy hope is vanish'd, and thy joy is fled,
 Thou didst presume thyself th'unerring guide:
 What paths of pure devotion hast thou try'd?
 Did pray'r begin each consecrated day?
 Has time on trifles ne'er been thrown away?

And

And didst thou earnestly and always strive
 From every sin each sacred hour to live?
 Copying thy Saviour's pattern, mercy show,
 "Reprove thy friend, befriend thy greatest foe;
 Teach grief to smile, and ignorance to know."

Alas! said reason, faltering with a sigh,
 That I have sometimes err'd I can't deny;
 But I will hope, and lay aside my fear,
 For GOD all mercy cannot be severe.

Conscience reply'd, that hope is false and vain,
 And like the first will quickly end in pain.
 Think'st thou one attribute alone shall shine?
 Does only mercy prove our GOD divine?
 Justice and mercy both to him belong,
 But injur'd justice cries aloud for wrong.
 Deprav'd, corrupted totally thou art,
 Depriv'd of ev'ry good in ev'ry part!
 Forbear, vain reason, then; attempt no more
 To boast of wisdom, goodness, or of pow'r:
 Thy goodness like the morning-cloud is gone,
 Or early dew dry'd by the radiant sun.
 How wilt thou then appear, what refuge see?
 For *Tekel* must, alas! be wrote on thee.

Despair then sadly press'd my sinking mind,
 Which peace or pleasure now in nought could find.
 Nor sprightly dance, nor soft symphonious strain,
 Nor books, nor social converse eas'd my pain:
 Till pure Religion came, with looks divine,
 With promis'd glory, and with grace benign.
 Illum'd by her, a ray of heavenly light
 Broke in upon my soul's enraptur'd sight:
 Then lively Hope stretch'd forth her golden wing,
 And Faith triumphant sweetly learn'd to sing.
 Divinely taught, I chose my favourite seat,
 The posts of fair angelic wisdom's gate.
 No longer dazzled, and misled by show,
 With scorn I view'd the pomp of all below;

Resolv'd

Resolv'd to live as righteous men have dy'd,
And nothing know but Jesus crucify'd.
Walking serene in wisdom's pleasant ways,
(Whose flow'ry paths are peace and pleasantness)
The joys of perfect faints I long'd to see,
And drop the load of frail mortality.

But, oh! not so! the Saviour did ordain
"To suffer first, and then with him to reign."
Thy will be done, thy sorrows let me share,
And after thee the cross in silence bear;
Since in thy life I can the path descry,
That leads to glorious immortality.

Such were my breathings in the solemn hour,
When first sweet mercy shed the kindly show'r
Of peace and love from yon divine abode,
And in my heart reveal'd the Tri-une GOD:
Such ardent, constant love, I wish to feel,
While humbly through this vale of tears I steal.

O Thou! to whom my secret thoughts are known,
Who see'st my tears, and hear'st my inward groan,
Attend my fervent, earnest, humble pray'r;
Though most unworthy, make me, Lord, thy care;
From all extremes, O keep me near to thee,
Alike from sin and superstition free.
Ne'er let me, Lord! thy tender Spirit grieve,
By wand'ring from thee while on earth I live.
Still, by thy word, direct me in the road,
Let ev'ry Birth-day find me nearer GOD:
Thus lowly may I live, and blessed die,
And after death no stone tell where I lie.